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## *Dance Division*

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VA Staff: Keep track of all Veterans who compete/enter through your VA facility and enter their information into **Local Level Participation form on page 14 of the handbook**. **Send this form to [Arts4Vets@va.gov](mailto:Arts4Vets@va.gov) when your local competition has ended.**

**Facilities may submit the top three finalists in each category.** A formal competition is not required at the local level but is strongly encouraged. All eligible Veterans should be given the opportunity to participate regardless of degree of talent.

All first place medal winners in the dance, drama and music divisions at the national level of competition will be invited to attend and participate as chorus members in the live stage show performance at the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

**Note:** Not all gold medal winners will be asked to perform their entry in the show. Due to time constraints, the Festival show directors will choose approximately 25 dance, drama, and music gold medal entries to perform their entry. The remaining gold medalists will be invited to participate in the Festival chorus.

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## *Tips for Taking Better Video Recordings*

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Please take a few extra minutes preparing a video correctly to give your Veteran the best chance possible during the judging process and to save hours of time with the judging process for our judges who donate their time.

- **Be sure to check that all videos play with video and audio before submission.**
- **Focus on the performer**, not the accompanists. Avoid taping from the back of the room. Stage presence cannot be judged if you cannot clearly see the performer.
- When video recording dance acts, it is necessary to include the whole-body in the entire recording, including the feet.
- **Sound control** is important! Clear audio makes a performance much easier (and enjoyable) to judge. Make sure your sound is good and balanced. Be aware of the accompaniment being too loud. Oftentimes we see/hear the speaker/player is next to the video camera and it is difficult to see/hear the performer.
- Consider holding your local competition/show and then video recording **ONLY** the acts that will be sent forward for national judging.
- **Dance, drama, and music entries** will be accepted (MP4, WMV, MOV) through the Arts4Vets App.

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## *Dance Rules*

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1. All entries in the dance, drama and music divisions must be recorded after October 1, 2022.
2. Suggested length of performance - no longer than three minutes.
3. Judges reserve the right to move an entry to the appropriate category or disqualify the entry if rules are not followed.
4. Dance entries will be judged based on the style of dance and steps incorporated in the performance as opposed to the style/genre of music selected.
5. Whole-body (head to toe) video recording for dance entries is necessary. Video recording can include close-ups of the body and/or feet but whole-body view should be included as well.
6. It is considered a solo when one Veteran dances with a non-Veteran partner.
7. **Entries MAY NOT be expanded with non-eligible Veterans or any other individual unless it is a partner dance where the partner is necessary to perform the dance movements.** Although the National Veterans Creative Arts program recognizes the therapeutic value of participation of staff, volunteers and ineligible Veterans in groups, it is essential in keeping with the fairness of the competition that **only eligible Veterans** are competing against each other.
8. **CD audio tracks** of the dance division entries are **NOT required to be sent to the dance chairperson**. However, should the entry place first in the national competition and the Veteran(s) be invited to perform their entry in the Festival stage show, the CD audio track must be sent to the dance division chairperson.
9. **TITLE PAGE** – Each entry must have a title page displayed prior to the entry being shown. The title page should include the Category and the Title of the Entry. The title page can be inserted during the editing process or it can be done manually prior to the taping. It is acceptable to hold up a handwritten sign that states the category and title of piece.

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## Dance Categories

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All categories are inclusive for Veterans who are ambulatory or use assistive devices for movement (i.e. wheelchair, crutches, walkers, etc.).

1. **Ballroom** - Solo or Group. Pattern of movement in a choreographed routine. Structured ballroom dances such as the waltz, jitterbug/swing, hustle, disco, polka, lindy hop, fox-trot, quick step. Veteran(s) should maintain physical contact with partner for greater part of dance.
2. **Latin Ballroom** - Solo or Group. Latin style structured ballroom dances such as samba, cha-cha, salsa, Meringue, Machida, rumba, tango, etc. Veteran(s) should maintain physical contact with partner for greater part of dance.
3. **Country/Western/Folk/Ethnic/Cultural** - Solo or Group. Country/western dances such as: Two Step, Waltz, Cowboy or Traveling Cha Cha, Polka, Schottische, promenade dances, East Coast Swing, West Coast Swing, Line Dance, Square Dance. Choreographed wheelchair dances associated with various cultures or countries. Examples may include: Clogging, Jewish Hora, Jig, May Pole, Mexican Hat, etc.
4. **Modern/Contemporary** – Solo or group. Expressive dance that combines elements of several dance genres including modern, jazz, lyrical, and classical ballet. Contemporary dance stresses versatility and improvisation.
5. **Tap, Jazz or Ballet** - Solo or Group. Traditional tap, jazz, or ballet patterns of movement choreographed to music in a routine.
6. **Line Dance** - Set pattern of movements where the individuals end up facing 2 or 4 walls. Suggest a minimum number of 3 to form the line. **All group members must be Veterans unless the line dance requires a partner where the partner is necessary to perform the dance.**
7. **Interpretive Movement** - Solo or Group. The movements tell a story or interpret feelings through hand movements or gestures. Wheelchair does not need to move. Examples may include sign language or other hand movement and dance meditation. Stretching to music does not qualify entry into this category.
8. **Freestyle/Hip-Hop** - Solo or Group. Non-choreographed/non-patterned movements that can involve any style of dance. Movements are spontaneous/improvisational. Entries into this category may contain many diverse steps and movements allowing dancers to use freedom of expression to enhance their dance style. Example: Freestyle, hip-hop, etc.
9. **Novelty** - Solo or Group. A routine consisting of original, imaginative, or innovative dance movements that incorporate a theme concept or characterization throughout the entire performance.

**10. Special Recognition** - Solo or Group. Wheelchair or ambulatory. Entries that recognize individuals who exhibit creative expression through the use of dance while possessing significant physical or psychological limitations. The intent of this category is to reinforce the concept of the arts as therapy, where an individual uses artistic expression to facilitate successful treatment outcomes.

Entries in this category **MUST** also include:

- **A written statement/narrative** (50 to 250 words) by a VA staff person or the Veteran of why the Veteran is deserving of special recognition
- Consent form 10-3203 and 10-5345 (included in this handbook) must be signed and dated by the Veteran. The staff contact person submitting the entry for the Veteran should safeguard the signed consent forms at their VA facility.